

# Research Summary

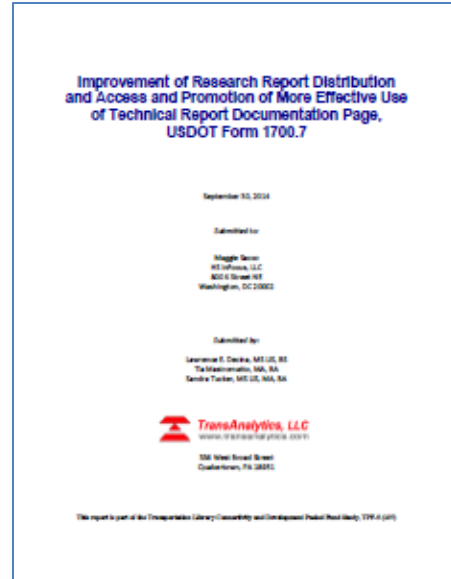
## Improvement of Research Report Distribution and Access and Promotion of More Effective Use of Technical Report Documentation Page, USDOT Form 1700.7

This report is part of the [Transportation Library Connectivity and Development Pooled Fund Study, TPF-5 \(237\)](#)

Based on input from the [AASHTO RAC \(Research Advisory Committee\) Transportation Knowledge Network \(TKN\) Task Force](#), the Missouri-led [Transportation Library Connectivity and Development Pooled Fund study TPF-5\(237\)](#) sponsored a project to explore two important questions facing the transportation research community.

- 1) PART A. How can we improve the distribution of and access to research reports, particularly those which are funded through the State Planning and Research ([SP&R](#)) program?
- 2) PART B. How can we improve and promote more effective use of the Technical Report Documentation page (TRDP) (USDOT Form 1700.7) which is included as a part of a research report?

The results of the project's final report are currently being used as a springboard for action by the Task Force in its efforts to coordinate agreement on and compliance with more improved and efficient processes for report



distribution and access by all relevant stakeholders.

### PART A. RESEARCH REPORT DISTRIBUTION AND ACCESS

The **research methodology** involved 1) a telephone survey to SP&R report recipients on FHWA directive list concerning what they receive and their practices; 2) an electronic survey to state DOT libraries concerning their distribution and publishing practices; and 3) the development of distribution instructions for state DOT librarians.

The report **concluded** that all State DOT libraries surveyed (n=21) distribute SP&R reports to Transport Research International Documentation ([TRID](#)) and the National Transportation Library ([NTL](#)). Most libraries distribute reports to the National Technical Information Service ([NTIS](#)); but only half distribute to the remaining recipients on the FHWA directive letter. The majority of state DOT libraries surveyed have an alert system; catalog SP&R-funded reports from their DOT; use group email distribution lists; and store SPR-funded reports on an internal server. About



half of the libraries assign a [permanent URL](#) to their reports.

The final report **recommended** the following measures:

- ☒ State DOT libraries should continue to distribute SP&R-funded reports to TRID, NTL, and NTIS to maintain discovery and preservation of transportation research
- ☒ State DOT libraries should maintain their current distribution and preservation practices, and make reports available to researchers and practitioners within three months of report completion and approval.

A first draft of report distribution instructions was included in the final report.

#### PART B. TECHNICAL REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE (TRDP)

The **research methodology** involved 1) a literature review documenting the origins of TRDP and similar documentation pages; 2) a canvas of state DOT and transportation subject database librarians on current practices regarding the TRDP; and 3) a random selection of published TRDPs from TRID and NTL to identify current TRDP practices.

The final report **identified** that the 1972 TRDP and 1975 instructions are the current information available for completing the TRDP. The most populated fields on the TRDP are: title, author, abstract, keyword, report date and number, performing and sponsoring organization. There is inconsistency regarding the completion of all other fields.

The final report **recommended** the following measures:

- ☒ A universal TRDP with an instruction sheet should be made available at a central and easily

accessible location. This will improve consistency in completion of page.

- ☒ Updating the current 1975 instructions is recommended. A proposed modified form with updated instructions (to clarify the ambiguity of certain fields) was included in the final report.

- ☒ Inclusion of URLs and use of [Transportation Research Thesaurus](#) terms are recommended with reservations.

#### Project Information

**PROJECT NAME:** Improvement of Research Report Distribution and Access and Promotion of More Effective Use of Technical Report Documentation Page, USDOT Form 1700.7

**PROJECT START/END DATE:** March through September 2014

**PROJECT COST:** \$39,949

**LEAD CONTRACTOR:** TransAnalytics

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Larry Decina

**REPORT NUMBER:** [cmr 15-003](#)

**REPORT DATE:** October 2014

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